Making the Change
How to Make the Transition from GDOC to C2PC
National Search and Rescue School

Hold on to your SAR School coffee cups! Change is on the horizon. Just as most of you are finally getting used to the quirks and glitches of the Geographic Display Operations Computer (GDOC), its time to pull the plug and switch to another program. And as if this was not bad enough, the GDOC replacement, Command Control Personal Computer (or C2PC for short) is actually two separate programs which work together to do the same tasks as it's predecessor. Because of the Y2K bug, you are loosing your best friend on watch, and being forced to shake hands with two complete strangers.

But things are not as bad as they seem. Help is available to make the transition from GDOC to C2PC as smooth as possible. The National Search and Rescue School has been teaching C2PC, with it's counterpart program called USCG SAR Tools, since March of 1999. So far, over 80 students have completed the course of instruction on C2PC, and are serving in command and operations centers throughout the Coast Guard. These graduates can be considered subject matter experts at your unit.

Besides teaching the new programs, the SAR School staff has been working closely with Yorktown's Performance Technology Center, C2CEN, and INRI, the program's manufacturer to develop an Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS). The EPSS is a tool that was designed to help the GDOC user learn the new keystrokes and mouse clicks to perform routine search planning functions on the new programs. Built into the EPSS is a training tool designed to help Senior Controllers and Operations Center Supervisors monitor retraining of their watchstanders as they make the leap from GDOC to C2PC and USCG SAR Tools.

BACKGROUND

As mentioned above, C2PC is actually two programs in one. The C2PC client application provides the SAR controller with all the mapping features needed to do the job. It provides the picture. The C2PC program was developed for the Department of Defense through a civilian contractor. The USCG SAR Tools program is a "plug in" to the C2PC application, which allows the controller to perform virtually all of the functions that GDOC did, plus some new features that will enhance the controller's ability to perform their duties in a timely manner.

Presently, GDOC is the primary search planning tool in over 50 Coast Guard command and operations centers. Faced with the challenge of retraining hundreds of SAR controllers on the new programs, the SAR School staff set out to identify training options to help make the transition without disrupting the unit's operational tempo.

Since both C2PC and USCG SAR Tools came with their own electronic Help files, it was decided the best course of action would be to try and merge the two program's Help files into one big EPSS. Unfortunately, this task was not as easy to accomplish as it may seem. Although C2PC and SAR Tools was developed by the same contractor, the Help files were written in different formats and are not compatible with each other. The solution was to expand and make improvements to the USCG SAR Tools Help file to include C2PC tasks. Although there are still 2 separate programs, the USCG SAR Tools Help file now provides the user with a single point reference for doing both SAR Tools and C2PC tasks. Where it can, the EPSS provides a link to detailed information on USCG SAR Tools applications. When searching for additional information for C2PC features, the EPSS will tell you how to find it in the C2PC Help file.

HOW TO USE THE EPSS

You probably already know how a Microsoft Help system works. Click on the Help Topics under the Help pull down menu in the USCG SAR Tools window to launch the EPSS. Once the Help window appears, you will notice three navigation tools on the left side of the window. These tools; Contents, Index, and Search, provide you with different ways to find what you are looking for.

Using the Contents tab is similar to using a table of contents in a printed book. Entries with a plus sign on the left have more books or pages under them. Click the plus sign to view them. You can scroll down the list of pages, and view the contents of the page by double clicking on the title.

The Index tab contains an index to the entire Help file, arranged alphabetically. To find a word in the index, type the word in the box at the top. As you type, the index displays the first word that matches your entry and highlights it. You can also use the scroll bar to scroll up and down the index. Double clicking on a word will send you to that section of the help file.

The Search tab does just that. It searches the entire Help file for the word you type in the search box, and displays all the matches of that word in the box below. It finds the word you are looking for. It does not consider context.

The experienced GDOC user will notice certain functions and tasks have different names in C2PC. For instance, most GDOC users know how to plot out a Position and Intended Movement (PIM) Track. C2PC does not have a PIM Track option. It has a similar feature called Routes. But without knowing that, how would the GDOC user know to look up Routes instead of PIM Track? In working with the program's developer, we tried to make the Help file as seamless as possible. So when you type in PIM Track in the Search window, it launches you automatically into the Routes section.

C2PC & USCG SAR TOOLS QUICK START

Most people prefer to learn a new computer program through trial and error. Given enough time, most people will learn how to use a program by randomly pushing buttons and clicking the mouse. Once their patience has worn out they will turn to the program user's manual or the Help system. With this in mind, the EPSS comes with a "Quick Start" section that covers most of the routine tasks the controller should be familiar with. Quick Start is accessed through the Contents tab. Once clicked, you have your choice of going into either C2PC's or USCG SAR Tools Quick Start. Each Quick Start has a list of "How do I _____" questions. By clicking on your question, the Quick Start takes you to the answer. The answers are written to provide you the specific keystrokes needed to perform the task.

For the more difficult tasks with several keystrokes, audiovisual files are included that shows the cursor tracking across the screen. These video clips can be viewed by clicking on the movie icon in the Quick Start.

Since there are two Quick Starts, you need to have an idea of which Quick Start to look in. Ask yourself what you want to accomplish. If the task has to do with a mapping feature, your best bet is to look in the C2PC Quick Start first. If it has to do with SAR planning, try USCG SAR Tools Quick Start. You'll also notice that some features such as measuring a range and bearing and displaying an icon (both considered mapping functions) can be done using the C2PC and USCG SAR Tools programs.

TUTORIALS

The Tutorial section of the EPSS provides the user with real-world scenarios to practice frequently used C2PC and USCG SAR Tools operations. It provides the user with a realistic opportunity to practice what they have just learned. When appropriate, the user can compare answers with the correct answer. Help in accomplishing the task is a click away in the task's Quick Start.

The Tutorial Section was designed with both the user and the Command Center supervisor in mind. Each command center supervisor has a responsibility to make sure their watchstanders become proficient with the new programs. The Tutorials were written as a means for the supervisor to measure their watchstander's progress as they make the transition. Sections of the Tutorials can be piecemealed out as training assignments and turned for review. The Tutorials will walk the user through most of the common features of the two programs.

NOT JUST FOR GDOC USERS

The EPSS was intended to help the GDOC user make the leap to C2PC and USCG SAR Tools. But the EPSS can also be used to introduce new controllers to the program. GDOC experience is not a prerequisite for using the EPSS. The EPSS can be used as part of a department's training program's personal qualification standard for using C2PC and USCG SAR Tools. First time controllers can learn the program through the self-paced tutorials and become proficient in using the program prior to attending the National SAR School.

WHAT THE EPSS WILL NOT DO FOR YOU

The Quick Start sections of the EPSS will help you learn the button-ology. It will walk you through the key strokes and mouse clicks to help you do your job. It will not (and can not) tell you *when* to press the buttons. The controller still needs a solid understanding of search theory before using the program for search planning purposes. Don't expect to find the answer to "How do I find someone?" in Quick Start. Learning the theory behind what the computer is doing is best accomplished in through a formal training program and on the job training. And let's face it, if the EPSS could tell you how to find someone, the staff of the National SAR School would be out of a job.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT…

Just as there was a learning process for GDOC, there too will be a learning process with C2PC and USCG SAR Tools. The programs are not bug-free, and you can expect bumps in the road as new problems are identified. Within the Frequently Asked Questions section of the EPSS is a link to Additional Sources of Help if you'd like to ask a question that isn't contained in the EPSS.

ATTENTION!
Electronic Performance Support System Users!

An updated version of the EPSS is available for download.

To met the June release of C2PC, a beta version of the EPSS was included in the initial release. Since then, the contractor has made significant progress in completing the EPSS. To download the updated EPSS visit the National SAR School's web site at:
www.uscg.mil/hq/rtc

Follow the directions provided to install the latest version of the EPSS directly into your USCG SAR Tools program.